

REMARKS

In view of the above amendments and the following remarks, reconsideration and further examination are respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 2, 5, 7-14, 17-31, 36, and 37 have been canceled without prejudice. Claims 3, 4, 6, 15, 16, and 32-35 have been amended. Consequently, claims 3, 4, 6, 15, 16, and 32-35 are currently pending and under consideration.

Allowed/Allowable Claims

Initially, the applicants wish to thank the Examiner for indicating that claims 3-4, 6, 15-16, and 32-35 contained allowable subject matter in item 8 of the Office Action.

Dependent claims 3, 4, 6, 15, 16, and 32-35 have been rewritten into independent form as new independent claims 3, 4, 6, 15, 16, and 32-35, respectively. It is therefore believed that independent claims 3, 4, 6, 15, 16, and 32-35 are in condition for allowance.

Claim Objections

In item 3 of the Office Action, claims 32-33 were objected to for informalities. Dependent claims 32 and 33 have been amended in order to correct the informalities cited in item 3 of the Office Action.

Claim Rejections Under 35 USC §102

Claims 1-2, 5, 7, 10, 12-14, 17-22, 25-27, and 30-31

In item 5 of the Office Action, claims 1-2, 5, 7, 10, 12-14, 17-22, 25-27, and 30-31 were rejected under 35 USC 102(b) "as being anticipated by Bajaj et al. (US Patent No. 6,056,765)." Applicant has canceled claims 1-2, 5, 7, 10, 12-14, 17-22, 25-27, and 30-31. Therefore, it is requested that the rejection of claims 1-2, 5, 7, 10, 12-14, 17-22, 25-27, and 30-31 in item 5 be withdrawn.

Claim Rejections Under 35 USC §103

Claims 8-9, 23-24, and 28

In item 7 of the Office Action, Claims 8-9, 23-24, and 28 were rejected under 35 USC 103(a) "as being unpatentable over Bajaj et al. ('765) in view of Mitchen (US Patent No.

5,014,718).” Applicant has canceled claims 8-9, 23-24, and 28. Therefore, it is requested that the rejection of claims 8-9, 23-24, and 28 in item 7 be withdrawn.

It should be understood that the above remarks are not intended to provide an exhaustive basis for patentability or concede the basis for the rejections in the Office Action, but are simply provided to overcome the rejections made in the Office Action in the most expedient fashion.

In view of the above amendments and remarks, it is submitted that the present application is now in condition for allowance, and the Examiner is requested to pass the case to issue. If the Examiner should have any comments or suggestions to help speed the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned representative by telephone.

Respectfully submitted,

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